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THE

Recd. at D. of S. Dec. 18. 1849

POET'S FIRST EFFORT;

OR

THE HOPEFUL WANDERER.

BY JOHN D. FOOT,

An old Convict who has been recently discharged from the State Prison at Sing Sing, N. Y., where he has been incarcerated for the last ten years and five months, under an illegal sentence passed upon him by Judge MORRIS, the Recorder of the City and County of N. Y.

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*Deposited in the Clerk's Office
for the Southern District*

SONG ON A PRISON.

A prison ! ah, the very name
Speaks volumes full of tarnished fame,
And darts within my breast, a pang
From agony's deep-wounding fang.

A prison ! hold, my fears awake,
Lisp but the word, my heart-strings quake ;
Methinks I see the grief and care,
That prisoned victims suffer there.

A prison ! why those massy walls,
Those straightened cells, and gloomy halls
Bespeak the pain that is endur'd
By all who may be there immur'd.

A prison ! lets its iron doors,
Its grated windows, flagging-floors ;
Admonish us to shun that guilt,
To punish which, such walls are built.

A prison ! heaven keep me free
From crimes that threaten liberty :
And save me, O ! in future, save
From tombs which serve the living's grave.

A prison ! cling to equity,
Let equal rights, and industry,
Supply the wants, or quell the rage,
Which nature, or a foe may wage.

A prison ! let a lisping tongue
Shout warning to the old and young ;
Let past experience decide,
Which hails the golden-rule as guide.

A prison ! cease my soul the view,
Let balls and chains, and shackles too,
Let bolts and bars, and fetters strong ;
A caution stand, and close my song.

PS 1683
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INTRODUCTION.

This little work is presented to the public, under the title of "The Poet's First Effort," &c. You are not, however, to imagine from what this title seems to declare, that these pages contain the first attempt of his poetical genius ; for he had composed, previous to the formation of the present small poems, about eighteen hundred verses of poetry, on different subjects ; something like twelve hundred of which are not now, in his possession ; they not having been delivered up to him on the day of his emancipation by the keepers of the prison at S. S., who had received them in their care for that purpose.

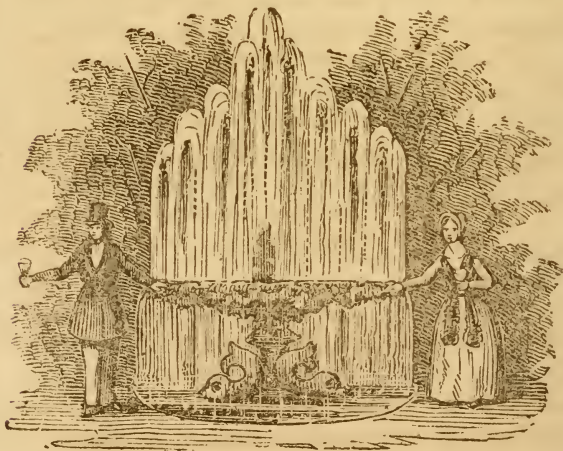
So, then, as this is not my first effort at the composition of poetry, you will readily presume that the real import of the title's insinuation, is to affirm (what, of course, is the fact) that you here have the substance of my First Effort before the reading community, in the form of a poetical pamphlet.

I have never, as yet, published any of my writings, (though) I fear others have at least, published *some* of them, for me, seeing that opportunity has been slow, backward, and bashful ; and seemed more ready to frown than to smile on such an undertaking. I have nothing to say in their favor. If they have not the faculty and intrinsic quality for recommending themselves, I can do nothing by (self-applause) for their free and wide circulation. This, notwithstanding, I will anxiously hope for, being in circumstances, you all

know, or many of you do, pretty well of what kind, that most fervently prays for such a blessing. Such as they are you have them ; or will, I hope ; and thus enable their begetter to rise from the dust of adversity, (in which he has so long been held by the lion-like grasps of misfortune, poverty, and villainy,) and recline his early fatigued and frail body on the couch of at least, "Enough and to spare"*

*I will be under the utmost obligations to Rev. Mr. Gordon (former keeper of the state prison) who received into his care different parcels of my writings ; or to any other individual who may have them, or who knows where they are ; if he, or they, will have the kindness to inform me where they may be procured. I gave them personally to Mr. Eldridge, keeper for several years of that prison, who handed them over as he said, to Mr. Gordon ; who in turn gave them into the care of the presiding superintendents, and could not on the day of my discharge, find them in the desk.

Mr. McDuffee received about four hundred verses into his charge in the year 1842 or 1843. And shortly after this date, between two and three hundred verses were taken out of my cell, while I attended chapel on a Sabbath ; and William H. Peck (then agent there) told me on my inquiry after them that they should be kept for me.



THE POET'S FIRST EFFORT

OR

THE HOPEFUL WANDERER.

THE LARK.

One that had for several years successively, been heard near the window of the poet ; and delighted him in no small degree with its thrilling notes of heart-cheering music.

Gay songster ! thy music my bosom enraptures,
I feast on the cates of thy magical strains ;
Each twittering flash from antiphony, captures
An anodyne balsam for sorrow and pains.

Thou rousest the muses when thoughtless in slumbers,
Attuning their tongues, and their harp's sweetest string
With warblings adorning their subtlest numbers,
Portraying those anthems the seraphim sing.

O ! art thou, pray tell us, an offspring of Moses—
Thy mother, an issue of Abraham's line ?
Thy notes of enchantment most clearly discloses,
That Israel's lyre was anciently thine.

Methinks that each blast that resounds from thy lyre
Bursts forth from those singers, [sweet singers of yore]
Whom Solomon classed in his never-matched choir,
To send upon high the symphonious roar.

For surely thy harp, is, though hung on the willows,
With harmony fraught, like his chorister's voice ;
Recalling at day-spring our heads from our pillows,
And causing our hearts with your lays to rejoice.

Yet Israel's harp, on the willows, when swinging ;
In taciturnity's slumber was bound :
His sons and his daughters no voice had for singing ;
But grief and condolence among them were found.

But you and your harp, have a carnival lasting [year ;
As spring, and the concerts which basks through the
Exempt from condolment, home-grievance and fasting,
Thy songs are convivial and crowned with good cheer.

No sickness, disaster, no torture, nor anguish ;
No friends in misfortune to awaken thy care :
No business to falter, no prospects to languish ;
Nor anything likened to misery to share.

We hear thee at morning, at noontide and ev'ning ;
Yea, every hour that leisure admits,
Dispensing thy sonnets, the silence relieving
That broods o'er the lawns where thy domicil sits.

The silence ! I wonder, for you and your fellows
Have banished dull silence away from the wood ;
And sounds of rejoicing, each meadow bemellows
With ecstasy, filling the whole neighborhood.

Thou swellest the spring to repletion, with pleasure ;
Enticing the flowers to blossom and smile,
Bedecking thy homestead with nature's fair treasure !
Each frown of the season, with joy to beguile.

Throughout spring and summer, thy lays seldom failing
Thou flightest around and about thy retreat ;
Now perched on some tree, the aurora's smile hailing
And now on some bush a fair nosegay to greet.

Thus daily, each hour is spangled with gladness ;
Joy sweetens thy pastime wherever you stray ;
The glee of thy heart is as foreign to sadness,
As day is to night, or thy notes to decay.

And when dwindling phœbus, now harshly declining,
Has thrown thy retreat in fierce ursa's embrace ;
Thou quittest thy homestead, full void of repining,
Thy southerly strollings, anew to retrace.

Thou scornest the howlings of winterly weather,
Nor ice, snow, or frost, can awaken thy care ;
Thou mockest the trammel, the gin, and the tether
And makest the spring to encircle the year.

The meadows down south are as rich to thy craving
As those on the Hudson, where now you reside :
There fresh efflorescence, mid forests is waving
Inviting your visits, when here they subside.

But how wilt thou waft through the space interposing
By what will you steer that far part to attain !
Is instinct thy helm ; e'er ready, disclosing
Thy course through the mazy ærial main ?

Has heaven provided the sea coasts with beacons,
Implanting within thee a power to guide,
Which tells thee, as soon as allurements here weakens,
That spring is beginning down south to provide ?

Is instinct a knowledge, a fanciful power,
A will or a faculty likened to mind ;
A wish and desire that shifts with the hour ?
Or one and the whole of these jointly combin'd ?

Or, art thou reminded by phœbus' declining,
The absence of insects and shrubbery meat ;
To flee from the frowns of a winter, combining
Its forces to smother our herbage in sleet ?

Yet calm and undaunted, you bask 'neath the summer,
Thy star of direction is sure, past a doubt ;
Both south, and septentrion, early a comer
You travel with transport and toy on the rout.

Ah ! who would not envy the sweets of thy station,
And long for the pinions that vie with the spring ?
Nay, rather partake of thy pure recreation,
Enjoying the gaieties shared on the wing.

Thy sphere of enjoyments are wide as the ocean,
As deep and as high as the earth and the sky ;
Thou strollest at random, with fluttering motion,
Outstripping the fleetest of earth's coursers by.

Thou seemest to soar with the sidereal eagle,
Coheir with the fairest and best of its crew ;
Outgoing the steamboats, the race-horse and beagle,
Each moment here, there, and elsewhere seen in view.

However, the trait that the highest delights us
Is heard in the flash of thy joy swelling strains :
Whenever we hear thee, thy chantings invite us
To drown, in oblivion, our sorrow and pains.

NEW-YEAR.

Composed at the opening of the year 1849.

The dawn of a "New-Year has bursted its tire,
Has flown from bosom of time's vast abyss,
And stands at our thresholds, our breasts to inspire
With mutual wishes for annual bliss.

It breathes in our minds, what its late predecessor
Was fain to instill on the day of its birth ;
Exciting the heart of each joyous addresser
To welcome his neighbor with gladness and mirth.

And now, with emotions approved and beseeching,
Let's hail its arrival with holy-day cheer :
Ourselves, from our selfishness freely redeeming,
We'll wish to the wide world "A happy New-Year."

We'll wish, to ourselves first, a love-swelling ocean ;
And then to our neighbors a will to partake :
That timely, our tides in perpetual motion,
May largely expand each recipient lake.

Our streams, should besprinkle our kin and relations,
Should flow through our land to the rich and the poor,
Yea, water the mansions and cots of all nations,
Distributing rivers intrinsical pure.

Each rivulet, streamlet and brook, from our waters,
Should rise to overflowing, or swell to the brink ;
Till every fount of our sons and our daughters
Was filled with a beverage pleasant to drink.

And when full satiety, crowning our longings
Had shone in the reign of this bright plentitude ;
We'd hope that the world would abandon its wrongings;
Nor evermore injure, usurp, or intrude.

Ah! what a delightful and soul-cheering power
Would here be diffusing its kindness and love,
A sway, and a people, enjoying each hour,
A peace, and a friendship like angels above.

All hail to the morn, when such liberty, smiling,
Shall knock off the shackles of hatred and rage ;
Disdaining the frowns of a spirit reviling
The frailties of childhood—the dotage of age.

But when shall this state of pure happiness bless us,
And reign from the sea to the ends of the earth ?
When Lucre, and Honour, shall cease to oppress us,
We'll hail a new year of millennial birth.

When germs of vain glory no longer molest us,
And envy and malice disturb not our peace ;
We'll see the approach of an advent arrest us,
Proclaiming with joy, that ambition doth cease.

And here, of itself, a great portion of trouble
Soon fails ; since our toils for a phantom of dreams—
Our ardent pursuit of a pebble or bubble,
But robs us of *rest*, and the fruit which it teems.

Yet still, by the way ; he should blush, who'd persuade us,
To while away life, by disusage of time :
No cynical feelings should even degrade us—
No tub for a dwelling, in age or in prime.

T'is fretful anxiety, pushed by ambition—
This waking annoyance, for overmuch wealth ;
That gnaws off the roots of a blooming condition,
And dries up the juices of comfort and health.

The earth and its fruits, are the gifts of their maker,
For those, and those only, who seek them, design'd :
And he would be, of the meat a partaker ;
Must dress it, as dressed by the wise of mankind.

A temperate use of the means in our power,
A moderate use of the stores we enjoy,
Will furnish our fields with a harvest in flower—
Enough, and to spare, and all void of alloy.

Such, such is the boon that high heaven design'd us ;
As doth, from his providence, sweetly appear ;
And such we allow, when our neighbours remind us,
They wish us all, yearly, “ A happy New-Year.”

My heart would wish all men, and that, most sincerely,
 A happy, a pleasant, and mirthful New-Year;
 And hopes that each day of the year may pass cheerly,
 And find then enjoying the friends they hold dear.

But how can I hope this, unless we're persuaded
 That happiness lies in the arms of content;
 And that acquiescence, by no wish degraded,
 Consists in what moderate cravings invent.

So, if there is any one joined to his idol,
 Full sworn to bow down to an image of gold;
 We'll let them drive onward, unreined by this bridle,
 Till age, and experience, truth shall unfold.

Such persons, Fair Happiness cannot reside with,
 For care and solicitude dwell in her room;
 Both these, she has daily, and yearly to chide with,—
 And Peevish Dispute slays Content in its bloom.

Let's drive away care, then, this year, from our dwelling,
 Nor give it an entrance, again to our cheer;
 Then may each wish t'other a transport, excelling
 A single day's bliss, at the dawn of the year.

DOST THOU RELECT?

A poem composed by a convict, on a tombstone that was, at the time, under the lithographizing operations of the author of this "Effort."

Dost thou reflect,
 Whilst thou that stone dost hew,
 That God hath made both it and you?
 If not, the truth I must impart —
 That stone's an emblem of thy heart.

Dost thou reflect,
 How many years that stone has been
 From ev'ry mortal eye unseen? —
 Six thousand years have nearly past,
 And lo! it comes to sight at last.

Dost thou reflect,
 How many 've past the vail of tears,
 In these six thousand weary years ?—
 How many fled to worlds unknown ?
 Where they have found an endless home.

Dost thou reflect,
 While you that monument do hew,
 God's living monument are you ?—
 If still perchance, you cannot see
 How you a monument can be.

Look on thy sins, oh man ! and find
 That God is merciful and kind,—
 Look on thy follies past, and see
 That mercy's monument is thee.

THE CAPTIVE POET.

Composed on the occasion of, and with allusion to a few hints remembered by the writer : after hearing but a part of the above *reflections* rehearsed.

The poet grave within his prison cell,
 Borne down by real or fantastic chains ;
 Whom fortune doomed in solitude to dwell,
 His leisure hours fraught with mental pain.
 Salutes the muse with all his soul,
 Full anxious for a musive stroll

With piecing glance, he casts a pensive eye
 Upon historic, or the sacred page,
 Some pathway, or a subject to descry
 His pastime ramble hap'ly to engage ;
 Yet, finding none to suit his vein ;
 Tho' wakeful for the muse's strain.

He turns his eye upon the carver's stone,
 And finds a clue to measure out his rhyme ;
 Well pleased to range a highway (long well known)*
 For buoyant balms, to lighten heavy time,
 Then courts the muse, his verse to rule,
 And follows out the sculptor's tool.

* An allusion to his own experience as a stone-cutter.

With pen in hand, he traces out the stone
That is to mark the still and silent grave
Of some fame-worthy, high in honour flown,
Ere numbered with the blest, departed brave,—
Still holds the pen, and artist, too,
While tracing, in his sketchful view.

Then calls him from the stone, to trace in thought,
The reason why a monument is made—
Declaring, that a sacred lore, is wrought
On tombs, where sleep the hopeful, solemn shade—
“They lead the mind,” he seems to say,
“To pore upon the mortal day.”

They lead the mind to soar beyond the tomb—
To flit across the dreary wilderness of time,
By pointing upward from the hallowed gloom,
To some more blissful and enduring clime—
To regions of substantial rest,
Where pain and death no more molest.

From thence, he also draws the apt remark,
That we are each a living monument—
Are but a shadow, or a vital spark,
Extinct, or glowing, at “I am’s” intent—
Mere moving shades, our guilty race,
Who breathe and act through sparing grace.

That mercy actuates each pulse that beats—
The throbbing heart maintains in active play—
Each circuit of the flowing blood completes,
And keeps in life our flimsy frames of clay,
Upholds the mortal tenement,
In hopes that we will yet repent.

Thus does the poet, prison-gloom, beguile,
Extorts from solitude, a charm that’s free,
Constrains each dreary frown to wear a smile
That scents of glory, and of liberty;
Reminds us of our fallen state,
And proves that Heaven’s love is great.

I DO REFLECT.

[Intended as "a reply" to the inquiry of "Dost thou Reflect?" and composed after a perusal of it.]

I do reflect, and while the stone I hew ;
With your well-timed, and apt remarks in view ;
Beneath its crust of adamant, I find
A heart as hard, as soft, as our's enshrin'd.

I do reflect that men are clad with steel,
And cor'ed with hearts of flint that cannot feel ;
They see the *mounts* of woe their fellows bear,
While they a *molecule* disdain to share.

I do reflect that such has been the case
Since Adam's birth, gave birth to all our race ;
To him, we trace the day-spring of our birth,
And learn that man was made the lord of earth.

I do reflect that he was made sincere,
Endowed with feelings tender, pure and clear ;
And that, within his breast, was put a heart
To share in love and friendship's ties, a part.

I do reflect, and see that cloudless bliss
'Lumed Eden's hallow'd grounds, where nought amiss
Was found to taint the unpolluted air,
Until the serpent's guile intruded there.

I do reflect and see, yea, seeing, mourn
That mis'ry, of the serpent's sting, was born,
And learn from this, or think I do, that then
Arose the use of sympathy to men.

I do reflect, and cast a scanning thought
Beyond the snare, in which frail Eve was caught,
And find that Eden's blest and happy pair
Were not design'd for pity, grief, nor care.

I do reflect, and find that they were made
A holy, happy pair, but were betray'd ;
That pain and woe, that grief and death were hurl'd
For Eve's transgression, on a rising world.

I do reflect, reflect, and re-reflect,
 The rise of sorrow's fountain to inspect ;
 'Twas Eve that first the threaten'd fruit did eat,
 B'cause told 'twas pleasant to the sight and sweet.

I do reflect, and find that mutual grief—
 That pity flowed from thence, to woe's relief,
 An anguish, now soft unconcern, assail'd,
 And woe was on a fallen world entail'd.

I do reflect ; but soon alas ! I find
 That fellow-feeling left the human kind ;
 'Twas Cain that first a feeling brother slew,
 And thus, a heart of stone was brought to view.

I do reflect, and trace this very trait
 From Cain's own door, down to our inner gate—
 Self-anxious minds, and hearts encased in steel.
 Their venom'd darts, in ev'ry age, reveal.

I do reflect and see that crimes and cares
 Increased in number, as did Adam's heirs ;
 That soon the world, for sin and guilt was drown'd :
 Except one family, which was righteous found.

I do reflect, and see the world again,
 Re-peopled with another set of men ;
 See Abraham, Isaac, and his feeling son ;
 See, in this world to his unfeeling one.

I do reflect, and see Abelan blood
 Anew besmear the soil, as ere the flood ;
 See Moses rise and view his brother's rod,
 Imposing laws which prove they came from God.

I do reflect, and see that now, for sin,
 The laws of God, through Moses did begin :
 I see the law come, lo ! with it a curse ;
 Yet, ere I saw it, lo ! I saw still worse.

I do reflect, but ah !—alas, O man !
 That thou should'st bring upon thyself a ban :
 What cannot live in peace without a law ?
 Must brother thus his brother keep in awe ?

I do reflect, contrive, reflect again ;
Attempt, in anarchy to live, I find is vain :
The stronger would the weaker prince dethrone,
This monument be left a shapeless stone.

I do reflect, that countries void of law,
Would still have lords upheld by dint of war—
Disputes be settled by the blood-stained spear ;
And all the peaceful minded slaves to fear.

I do reflect, that then our polished rules,
Fine arts, and works of science, sculptor's tools ;
Schools, colleges, and thriving days,
Must droop and lifeless fall, where no law sways.

I do reflect, and let my thoughts run round
Through all the term six thousand years have wound :
Contemplate deeds of honest men and brave ;
Of tyrants too, and find their end's the grave.

I do reflect, and see our Washington—
Our pride and boast a (freeborn freedom's son,)
Lead on his brave and gallant few, through towns
To shield them from an enemy's arms and frowns.

I do reflect, admire and adore
His courage, tactic-skill 'neath cannon's roar :
For brav'ry and for sympathy of soul,
His name shines brightest, on the bravest roll.

I do reflect, and scrutinize the fame
Of heros ancient and of modern name ;
But find no gen'ral on the martial page,
To vie with him who did our battles wage.

I do reflect, that heros great in fight,
With hearts of oak, and clad in heaven's might
Have, being mortal, after conquest fled,
And now are numbered with the mighty dead.

I do reflect, that he, our Washington
Lies low in death, yet lives in freedom won ;
His memory throbs in ev'ry gen'rous heart
That vibrates in his country's freedom's part.

I do reflect that I have plann'd a stone,
For style, when cut, the fairest ever known ;
Design'd a lasting monument of fame
To him, by whom our country's freedom came.

I do reflect, and hold that ev'ry state
Is duty-bound to honour thus, their great ;
And that our country's ev'ry largest town,
Should raise one to his praise, and his renown.

I do reflect, and see that this indeed,
Would be to him no beneficial meed :
Yet tho' it would not swell his wealth, since dead,
It shows that we have hearts to love instead.

I do reflect, and trace to other climes
The rage of war, in these and former times :
See Jewry's kings invade the Amonities,
And slay their thousands in their bloody fights.

I do reflect, and see their prophets stand
And shout their war-whoops at the Lord's command :
I see their wars with infidelity,
And those who would an idol's people be.

I do reflect, and see their first King (Saul)
King David, David's son, and all ;
I see Manassah in unrighteousness,
The alien and the home-born son, oppress.

I do reflect, and yet in other lands
Trace kings as mad, with as ferocious hands :
Great Alexander in his Persian war,
Slays, puts to flight his millions, but what for?

I do reflect, and ask true reason, why ?
He doomed so many thousand men to die ;
And when she speaks, I hear her frankly say
He had the courage, and was proud to slay.

I do reflect, and ask his motive, too,
Whose "Life" says they his country overthrew—
That Xerxes first burned many Grecian towns—
Destroy'd their laws and trampled on their crowns.

I do reflect, and hear him farther say
To fight and rob was common in my day—
I heard of Pharaoh king of Egypt's fame.
And thought I'd lose my life or have the same.

I do reflect, on Cæsar and the rest
Of heros great, who plunder'd, kill'd, oppress'd ;
And see that most of all their mad-men bold
Had motives none, save valour, fame and gold.

I do reflect, and see the millions slain,
While grasping honour on the battle-plain—
A wild banditti, mad with frantic rage,
Whose crimes disgrace the vast historic page.

I do reflect that wars may still be just ;
If A invades, defend himself B must :
In such-like wars, alone should nation's fight—
Defensive war is all that can be right.

I do reflect, and see that this defence
Guards off invasions, and each false pretence ;
Each depredation on a country's right,
Should be repulsed by it, and heaven's might.

I do reflect that we should have recourse
To dint of arms, but in the last resource
Try mild means first, and use the soft reply
Which conquers those whose boastful threats run high.

I do reflect, that, should all men adopt
This rule, defence, all wars would soon be stop'd—
Aggressions in the land would find no place,
Peace unassail'd would bless the human race.

I do reflect upon the millions slain
By Roman gen'ral's—see a swelling train :—
Vast multitudes of all the nation's round
Were cut in pieces by their fools renown'd.

I do reflect and see their leaders grasp
The right to govern—fix a tyrant's clasp
Upon their aliens, and their townsmen too,
And style themselves republicans most true.

I do reflect upon their chronicles,
On what their best historian now tells ;
And see confusion in their courts and laws,
No more like ours than is calm peace like wars.

I do reflect upon the eastern kings,
With all their slain, from what their record springs—
Arabia, Egypt, Persia, Palestine ;
With all of Europe's lengthened battle-line.

I do reflect on these Americas,
And see their slain of past and present days ;
Behold the east and western Indian-Isles,
With all of Afric' sooty ranks and slaughter files ;

I do reflect, and see a multitude
That none could number, nor his thoughts include—
A longer train than all the world alive,
Whom savage warfare did of life deprive.

I do reflect, and hear that tyrant (rum,)
With Alcohol his monarch beat their drum—
List willing captives in their dying rolls,
Then slay their bodies—their immortal souls.

I do reflect upon the drunkards dead,
And count them more than those in war who bled—
A fearful, awful truth ! the which should shock
All feeling men, and quake the senseless rock.

I do reflect, and see that keen disease
Of divers orders, on the land and seas,
Has been the instrument of drawing breath—
Enlisting millions in the ranks of death.

I do reflect and find the numbers vast
That through the gloomy "vale of tears" have pass'd ;
I do reflect, long known it vain to sigh :
We too, are mortal, and we all must die.

I do reflect, and with a thoughtful mind,
Pursue the rise of all the human kind ;
Look through the pages of our works in vain,
Some light and knowledge on this point to gain.

I do reflect, and ask the ancient sage
To point me out this grand illuming page ;
I ask a second, and a third, yea all ;
But on this theme, their writings wear a pall.

I do reflect, and ask old China's sons,
Who boast of years that past a million runs :
Some tell us that the world did ne'er begin,
But as 'tis now, just so it e'er has been.

I do reflect, and ask plain reason next,
Who boldly says this is a false pretext,—
That if a dog, or plant had ne'er been made,
It could not die, nor grow from grade to grade.

I do reflect, and find this answer true,
For when a plant springs up, 'tis young and new ;
It grows, gets ripe ; then dies and is no more :
'Tis thus with this, and all that went before.

I do reflect, and see in things that grow,
A first rise, and an end, it must be so :
And thus in sprouts, I see this stone had birth
As well as men and beasts, with all the earth.

I do reflect that all was made we see ;
An author this implies, whoe'er he be ;
And none but Moses ever told us who,
The world and all things into being drew.

I do reflect, and in the bible find
That God has made the world the worlds combin'd ;
Thus learn the stone was made, with you and me,
By him who caused the world of worlds to be.

I do reflect upon my follies past,
And see they wear a dark and shady cast :
I spent my youth in doing worse than bad
And when I think of it my heart grows sad.

I do reflect, lament, and weep forlorn,
And have within my breast a rankling thorn,
A poisoned shaft that stings me to the core,
And still pricks deeper, and torments the more.

I do reflect, and with my heart thus stung,
Abhor the way in which I ran when young ;
Bewail the blindness of my downhill course,
Which led from bad to worse with gath'ring force

I do reflect and see alas, my way
Wound up and down, and in and out astray—
In crooked paths, detested by the perfect man,
In which so many youths before me ran.

I do reflect upon the wily charms
That clasp'd me first within a miss's arms,
Am now afraid to tell my tender years,
What ! only thirteen ! ay, but stay thy sneers.

I do reflect, and think how sly I stept—
Forsook her bed and 'neath her window crept
With cautious fingers on the shutter beat,
Where ent'ring, kept the secret thus complete.

I do reflect, and see, methinks I do,
Her head still peeping through the door in view ;
Where often, when the rest had gone to bed,
With shoes in hand me in she softly led.

I do reflect upon such sly deceit,
And see the consequence of erring feet :
'They close the eyes to all that's pure and clear,
And make a falsehood, but a jest appear.

I do reflect, and see that he who strays
With her who's lost to virtue's prudent ways ;
Will soon get drunk, will fight, and oft defraud,
If not blaspheme his sovereign, king and lord.

I do reflect, and 'tis reflective thought
That this same dagger to my bosom brought ;
Thoughts on what took me to a prison cell,
Creates within my breast a flaming hell.

Thus, do I think upon my follies past,
And see that sin still wears a gloomy cast ;
And learning this, we next may fully find,
That God is merciful and kind.

I do reflect and send my thoughts around ;
Amid the meadows, fields and other ground ;
Behold the trees, the shrubs and tender grass,
The lofty mountain, and the low morass.

I do reflect and see our cities stand
Composed of granite and of marble grand,
Of timber, brick, of lumber, and so on,
Built to the gothic style of pro-et-con.

I do reflect and see our towns, their streets,
Our hamlets, villages ; and all their seats :
I view their pavements, curbstones and brick-walks,
With here and there a park where fashion stalks.

I do reflect and see our lakes and streams,
Our ships, our fishes, and our cars and teams ;
I see our artificial workmanship,
Our cows, hogs, poultry, and our lambs that skip.

I do reflect upon the works of man
And ev'ry surface of their countries scan :
But nature no where, undisturbed has shown,
A mass, in all respects just like this stone.

I do reflect and view our cliffs and steeps,
And often find a crag that soiless keeps ;
But even these are overgrown with moss,
Or skimmed with mildew, mould'ring stone or dross.

I do reflect, and view the rocky strand
That firmly does the rolling seas withstand ;
But this has got an ocean-beaten face,
Nor bears, unbroken, any native trace.

I do reflect, but in the quarry find
A stone like this, that shows its native kind :
'Tis raised from slumber by a rousing blast,
And to "right" in purity at "last."

I do reflect that this same stone arose,
By being blasted from its long repose ;
And, that its age as it by look appears
Is like the world itself, six thousand years.

I do reflect and learn that God is kind—
The fountain head of love and grace combin'd ;
His goodness blooms on ev'ry plant that grows,
His favor tinges ev'ry stream that flows.

The earth but yields its produce through his care,
Tho' man, by culture may increase his share :
His rains descend and water ev'ry plain,
To quench the tiller's thirst—mature his grain.

The cattle of the hills, for man were made,
As well the mensal beast of ev'ry grade—
To draw the burden, plough and hoe the field,
And flesh-meat to the craving stomach yield.

We see his love in ev'ry cooling breeze
That fans the summer's rays, our hearts to please :
His sun in winter moderates each chill,
And daily lights the world, through gracious skill.

His goodness shineth, too, each night on high—
The moon and stars, in each nocturnal sky,
Illumes the earth, as with a feebler ray,
And shows his love as in the broad of day.

Each river, lake, the seas, and ocean show
His goodness in their ev'ry ebb and flow ;
They waft our vessels to each foreign part,
And send their fishes to each fishing mart.

Each seed-time, harvest, and the seasons tell
His goodness far to clear to doubt it well ;
And ev'ry offspring of his hands declare,
In glowing terms his providential care.

But most of all, we see the boundless grace
That shone through Jesus, on our fallen race.
Here love, peace, mercy, hand in hand, conjoined,
Proclaim through ev'ry land, that God is kind.

I do reflect upon his mercy past,
Upon his clemency which yet doth last,
Upon his anger which is slow to burn,
And on his gentle and forgiving turn.

I see his mercy in that fugitive
Whose envy could not let a better live,
Behold it in the stamp that marks the head
Of him who from a brother's slaughter fled.

I see it in the wilderness of old
Where Aaron and his people worshipped gold.
In David when he took Uriah's wife
By alien weapons, and usurped his wife.

In all those jewish rabbins, mad and blind,
Who spurned a promised king, so pure and kind.
In Saul of Tarsus who with power, God
Was pleased to turn from sin—to spare the rod.

I see it in those jewish kings, who slew
His new-born folks within their gates, when few :
His long forbearance, get their lives prolong'd,
Altho' high heaven's rights, they thus had wrong'd.

I see it in that shameful woman's son
Who wove such halters as the mother spun.
That brute tyrannic, whom herself had taught
To practise deeds which soon her slaughter wrought.

That monster cruel ! fierce !! of hell accurs'd !!!
Who slaked with christian blood his burning thirst.
That very Nero—famed for infamy,
Who stained with gore the ground of Italy.

(He, and his mother, meet indeed, their fate,
Yet finite reason says, it came too late :
Why does the merciful prolong the day
Of such as think it fun and jest to slay !)

I see his mercy in the popes of Rome,
Who tore the innocent from friend and home.
In blind inquisitors, and hundreds more
Who stept their wrath in pure and harmless yore.

Whene'er I turn mine eye, I see God's love
His goodness spangles all the sky above.
His favors fill the land from pole to pole,
His mercy speaketh peace, when heaves the soul.

To ev'ry nation, people, race, and tongue,
To ev'ry creature, whether old or young.
In ev'ry corner, tho' of minor place,
We see the favors of the God of grace.

I see his mercy in our modern times,
His mercy spares us when committing crimes :
'Tis mercy, mildness, love and grace refin'd
That proves that " God is merciful and kind."

The following remarks were written before I had formed the idea of inserting an Introduction to these poems ; but as they may be acceptable, and somewhat amusive to the reader, I have not thought them improper in their present place, although their use is partly superceded by the Introduction.

After the perusal of the above poem, and the one from which it originated, there is but little, or no doubt, but what the reader must have formed a conjecture respecting the author. Or, he has at least, arrived at the *not very questionable* conclusion, that this insignificant and shameless (though harmless and expectant) little "Wanderer" must have lately broken loose and escaped from the sublimely deranged and eminently embarrassed embrace of that up and down—in and out—no where resident, but everywhere prying individual; who has himself, but very lately broken loose and escaped from the thumb-screw like embrace of a free, enlightened and independent people ; the elevated pinnacles whose glory is balanced like an inimitable crest of fame ; on the glaringly conspicuous and dazingly exalted (though unshakingly firm and impregnable) 'Turrett ; called just laws and equal rights. Or in a word, you have presumed that the old convict has escaped—'tis true,

BELL TIME.

Composed one evening, between the ringings of the 7 and 8 c'olock bells.

At the sound of the bell we are struck with surprise,
What seven at eve ! then each moment fast flies :
We're strongly impress'd with the shortness of day ;
And made to feel deeply, that time steals away.

'Tis merely a trice, since a bell in the moon,
With cunning awoke us and showed us the dawn.
'Twas vocal with summonses, crying arise,
Get up finite mortals, learn wisdom, be wise.

Be diligent, active, and quiet yourselves right,
Dismissing the slumbers and musings of night ;
Put on with your clothing a purpose of mind,
To prove, that to duty you never are blind.

A moment, again by the bell we were told,
Your breakfast is ready, soon eat or 'tis cold.
The fire is wasting and time hastes afar,
Once past they are gone ; but then who can tell where ?

Still shorter the trice, since a bell, by its call
Said *dinner* is ready and waiting for *all* ;
The bell for our supper is scarcely yet past,
Thus speedeth our moments, than lightning more fast.

And soon we shall hear the retiring bell,
'Tis even, now couchee, and this its to tell :
Most forcibly does it declare in its tone
That time is the fleetest traveller known.

Alas ! yet a span more of time and a bell
Will ring to our mourners our funeral knell,
And tell to the infant, the youth in his bloom,
And aged ye are all on the verge of the tomb.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Some few persons no doubt, into whose hands this publication will fall ; will recognise the paragraphical announcement inscribed on the title page, as containing an assertion that is already well known.

If such be the case they will nevertheless, allow me to express my suspicion as to the veracity of their former information on this subject ; as well also, as to inform them that I intend to give them as soon as circumstances will admit, a minute account of my several arrests, trials, and sentences, &c.

I am well aware that many of our state residents are conscious of my confinement, and some of the circumstances connected with it : yet methinks they have been deceived. I have either been but partially represented to them ; or otherwise altogether misrepresented and vilified ; let either of which be the fact, their knowledge, of course on the subject, must be erroneous ; and consequently, calls for my correction.



Use thou my meat, and you shall find
A food, that nourishes the mind.
Eat, often, of this flavored dish,
And season thus the steward's wish.

A little song will do no wrong,
If humm'd from pleasing ditties :
So let these rhymes, swell through our climes,
And reach more foreign cities.